

and/or that substantially overlap with each other in a combined visual presentation on first and second display screens. In some embodiments, the first gaming wheel rotates clockwise and the second gaming wheel rotates counterclockwise during the play of a respective game on the wager-based gaming machine. In one or more of the foregoing embodiment, wheel stop positions on both the first gaming wheel and second gaming wheel can be adapted to align to form a multi-wheel payline across both the first and second gaming wheels.

[0020] Other methods, features and advantages of the invention will be or will become apparent to one with skill in the art upon examination of the following figures and detailed description. It is intended that all such additional methods, features and advantages be included within this description, be within the scope of the invention, and be protected by the accompanying claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0021] The included drawings are for illustrative purposes and serve only to provide examples of possible structures and process steps for the disclosed inventive gaming wheels and methods of presentation therefor.

[0022] FIG. 1 illustrates in perspective view an exemplary gaming machine.

[0023] FIG. 2 illustrates in block diagram format an exemplary network infrastructure for providing a gaming system having one or more gaming machines.

[0024] FIG. 3 illustrates in partial perspective and cut-away view an exemplary processor-based gaming machine having a multi-layer display according to one embodiment of the present invention.

[0025] FIG. 4 illustrates in block diagram format various components of an exemplary processor-based gaming machine adapted to provide a realistic emulation of one or more gaming wheels according to one embodiment of the present invention.

[0026] FIG. 5A illustrates a simulated display in side perspective view of an exemplary virtual gaming wheel for use in a processor-based gaming machine having a multi-layer display according to one embodiment of the present invention.

[0027] FIG. 5B illustrates a simulated display in top plan view of the exemplary virtual gaming wheel of FIG. 5A.

[0028] FIG. 5C illustrates a simulated display in side elevation view of the exemplary virtual gaming wheel of FIG. 5A.

[0029] FIG. 5D illustrates a simulated combination display in side perspective and top plan views of the exemplary virtual gaming wheel of FIG. 5A.

[0030] FIG. 6A illustrates a simulated display in top plan view of one exemplary set of concentric virtual gaming wheels adapted for the play of an associated game according to one embodiment of the present invention.

[0031] FIG. 6B illustrates one exemplary set of front screen, back screen and resulting combination screen presentations that can be used to form the simulated display of concentric virtual gaming wheels of FIG. 6A.

[0032] FIG. 6C illustrates one exemplary set of front screen, back screen and resulting combination screen presentations that can be used to form an alternative simulated display of virtual gaming wheels according to another embodiment of the present invention.

[0033] FIG. 7 illustrates a flowchart illustrating an exemplary method of presenting a simulated wheel on a processor-based gaming machine according to one embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0034] Exemplary applications of apparatuses and methods according to the present invention are described as follows. These examples are being provided solely to add context and aid in the understanding of the invention. It will be apparent to one skilled in the art that the present invention may be practiced without some or all of these specific details. In other instances, well known process steps have not been described in detail in order to avoid unnecessarily obscuring the present invention. Other applications are possible, such that the following examples should not be taken as definitive or limiting in scope or setting. Although these examples are described in sufficient detail to enable one skilled in the art to practice the invention, it will be understood that they are not limiting, such that other embodiments may be used and changes may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

[0035] Described herein are various processor-based gaming machines and systems that present spinning or rotating wheels. It will be understood that the term “wheel” can be distinguished from the term “reel” in the context of gaming machines and similar devices for purposes of the present invention. In general, a gaming reel can be a circular or cylindrically shaped item that is rotated about an axis for a gaming event such that an outer edge or other outer portion is prominently displayed or otherwise made of interest. Conversely, a gaming wheel can be a circular shaped item that is rotated about an axis for a gaming event such that a side, front face or other suitable play surface is prominently displayed or otherwise made of interest. As will be appreciated, a truly circular shape is not always necessary for such a gaming wheel, as ovals, squares, octagons and other alternative shapes may also be similarly spun such that a front face or other play surface is prominently displayed and made the subject of a game having a variety of stops displayed on a play surface.

[0036] The disclosed processor-based gaming machines can include a number of realistic adaptations, such as audio, video and/or physical adaptations, where each contributes to the perception of actual physical wheels. Such gaming machines and systems can include a specialized multi-layer display, one or more specialized wheel processors, and/or one or more dedicated wheel speakers adapted to present emulated physical wheel sounds, which sounds may be presented in stereo for added effect. Such components may be implemented and used individually or in various combinations, as desired.

Gaming Machines

[0037] Referring first to FIG. 1, an exemplary processor-based gaming machine is illustrated in perspective view. Gaming machine 10 includes a top box 11 and a main cabinet 12, which generally surrounds the machine interior (not shown) and is viewable by users. This top box and/or main cabinet can together or separately form an exterior housing adapted to contain a plurality of internal gaming machine components therein. Main cabinet 12 includes a main door 20 on the front of the gaming machine, which preferably opens